

GISCARD TALKS ON FOREIGN POLICY AT ELYSEE PRESS CONFERENCE

Paris Domestic Service in French 1936 GMT 20 Dec 74 L

[Press conference held by President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing at Elysee Palace on 20 December chaired by Pierre Sabbagh, director of ORTF second TV channel--live]

[EXCERPT]

[Jean Daniel] Did you personally have--can you confide with us--the impression from your conversation partners that there was some complicity, a coexistence, or a condominium of the superpowers? Do you think that their interests are opposed to those of the small nations? (Even considering) the courtesy you owe heads of state, do you think that there are diverging interests, a logic of divergence? Such as the analysis made by the previous government.

[Giscard] I do not believe that the two powers in question--after all, there are other powers in the world, China being one--are organizing in order to govern the rest of the world between them. I do not believe this. I believe that they are organizing for a twofold purpose. The first is that they wish to act so that there will not be a conflict between them. To avoid such a conflict, there must not be any detonators that could draw them into a state of conflict. From this naturally follows concerted attitudes on a certain number of problems, a certain number of difficulties more or less explicit such as Vietnam, the Near East, etc. Note that the essential part of their agreement is that it is an agreement not to go to war with each other.

Secondly, there is a desire on both the Soviet and American sides to use their great mutual capacity to settle their problems, especially those of economic and technological development. In this respect, there has certainly been a strong desire.

On the other hand, there is no intention, in my opinion, at any rate, that the solution of problems of no concern to them in their tete-a-tete should be systematically sought jointly. I do not have this impression at all.

[Daniel] In other words, they are not playing the European countries off against each other and Europe is not exploiting their rivalry?

[Giscard] No.